WHAT DOES THE BIBLE TEACH ABOUT PESTILENCE, PLAGUES AND GLOBAL PANDEMICS?

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While the term "pandemic" is a modern term and never used in the Scriptures, the Bible does use ancient Hebrew and Greek words for *pestilence* and *plagues* at least 127 times.

- The Hebrew word "*dever*" (דֶּבֶר) – which is commonly translated in English versions of the Bible as "pestilence" or "plague" – is used 49 times in the Hebrew Scriptures (Tanakh / Old Testament).

- The Hebrew word "*nega*" (נֶגַע) – which is mostly (though not always) translated in English versions of the Bible as "plague" – is used 78 times in Hebrew Scriptures (Tanakh / Old Testament). It is specifically translated into the English word "plague" 65 times in the King James Version (KJV) of the Old Testament.

- The Hebrew word "makkah" (מַכָּה) – which is sometimes (though not always) translated in English versions of the Bible as "plague" – is used 48 times in the Hebrew Scriptures (Tanakh / Old Testament). It is specifically translated into the English word "plague" 11 times in the King James Version of the Old Testament.

- The Greek word "*plege*" (πληγή) – which is often (though not always) translated in English versions of the Bible as "plague" – is used 21 times in the Greek New Testament. It is specifically translated into the English word "plague" 12 times in the King James Version.

- The Greek word "*loimos*" (λοιμός) is used 3 times in the Greek New Testament. It is specifically used twice as the English word "pestilences" in the King James Version.

While not every use of the words, *pestilence* and *plagues,* in the Bible refers to a terrible, infectious disease, many of the references do.[2] Throughout the Bible, we see repeated

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[1] The Joshua Fund is a non-profit educational and charitable organization to mobilize Christians to bless Israel and her neighbors in the name of Jesus, according to the Abrahamic Covenant of Genesis 12:1-3. As part of our educational mission, The Joshua Fund seeks to teach the Church and all those who are interested about God's plan and purpose for Israel and the nations, the purpose and power of Bible prophecy & the relevance of the Bible to the people of the Middle East and to all people around the world.

[2] According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, the definition of the English word *pestilence* is, "a contagious or infectious epidemic disease that is virulent and devastating," or "something that is destructive or pernicious." Likewise, the definition of the English word *plague* is, "an epidemic disease causing a high rate of mortality," or "a disastrous evil or affliction."

examples of God using diseases to accomplish His divine and sovereign purposes. There are also Biblical prophecies that warn us that God intends to use terrible, infectious diseases to accomplish His divine and sovereign purposes in the future.

What are God's sovereign purposes for using such terrible diseases?

- Executing divine judgment on an individual, a nation, or many nations for chronic, unrepentant sin.

- Warning other individuals and nations that they, too, could face divine judgment for chronic, unrepentant sin.

- Shaking an individual, nation, or many nations so that they will wake up from spiritual slumber or rebellion, repent of their sins, and turn in faith to a holy, personal, Biblical, healthy relationship with God.

Repeatedly in the Bible, God explains that in His mercy He will shake individuals and nations in a desire to get our attention and draw us to Him.

- In Amos 9:9, the Lord God says, "I will shake the house of Israel among all nations." (New American Standard Bible, NASB)

- In Haggai 2:7, the Lord God says, "I will shake all the nations." (NASB)

- In Hebrews 12:26, we read, "And His voice shook the earth then, but now He has promised, saying, "YET ONCE MORE I WILL SHAKE NOT ONLY THE EARTH, BUT ALSO THE HEAVEN." (NASB)

In the Gospels, the Lord Jesus Christ warns His disciples that "pestilences" will be one of the signs of the "last days" of human history, a time of shaking the world to wake up and realize that Christ's return to judge and reign over the earth is increasingly imminent.

- **Matthew 24:3-8** – "Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?" And Jesus answered and said to them: "Take heed that no one deceives you. For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many. And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, **pestilences**, and earthquakes in various places. All these are the beginning of sorrows." (New King James Version, NKJV)

- **Luke 21:10-12** – "Then He said to them, "Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be great earthquakes in various places,

and famines and **pestilences**; and there will be fearful sights and great signs from heaven. But before all these things, they will lay their hands on you and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and prisons. You will be brought before kings and rulers for My name's sake." (NKJV)

Consider, too, other examples of how God uses diseases to accomplish His purposes.

Examples of Individuals Inflicted with Terrible Diseases

- In the Book of Job, we read that Job was afflicted with a terrible disease. The Scriptures make clear that this was an attack by Satan that was allowed by God (see chapters 1 and 2). The Scriptures also make clear that this was not a judgment for Job's unrepented sins, as he was "blameless, upright, fearing God and turning away from evil." (Job 1:1). Satan uses the illness (and other attacks on Job and his family) to turn Job away from God. Yet God uses these traumas to draw Job closer to Himself. (New American Standard Bible, NASB)

- In the Book of Numbers, we read that Miriam – the sister of Moses – was inflicted with a terrible, infectious disease as a judgment because of her unrepentant sins against God. The text tells us that "the anger of the Lord burned" against the disobedience of many Israelites, including Miriam, and that Moses had to intercede in prayer for their healing. (see Numbers 12:1-15, NASB)

- In 2 Kings chapter 5, we read the account of Naaman, the commander of the Syrian army. When he gets a terrible, infectious disease for which he knows of no cure, he decides his only hope is to turn to the God of Israel. Therefore, he sends a servant to ask for the urgent help of Elisha, the Hebrew prophet. When God miraculously heals Naaman, the Syrian commander humbles himself and turns to faith in the God of Israel, saying, "Indeed, now I know that there is no God in all the earth, except in Israel." (2 Kings 5:15, NASB)

- In Matthew chapter 8, we read the account of the Lord Jesus Christ miraculously healing a man with a terrible, infectious disease (in this case, leprosy). "When Jesus came down from the mountainside, large crowds followed him. A man with leprosy came and knelt before him and said, 'Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean.' Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. 'I am willing,' he said. 'Be clean!' Immediately he was cleansed of his leprosy. Then Jesus said to him, 'See that you don't tell anyone. But go, show yourself to the priest and offer the gift Moses commanded, as a testimony to them.'" (Matthew 8:1-4, NASB)

- In Luke chapter 17, we read the account of the Lord Jesus Christ miraculously healing ten men with a terrible, infectious disease (leprosy), yet only one of them is grateful to God and humbles himself to worship Christ. "Now on his way to Jerusalem, Jesus traveled along the border between Samaria and Galilee. As he was going into a village, ten men who had leprosy met him. They stood at a distance and called out in a loud voice, 'Jesus, Master, have pity on us!' When he saw them, he said, 'Go, show yourselves to the priests.' And as they went, they were cleansed. One of them, when he saw he was healed, came back, praising God

in a loud voice. He threw himself at Jesus' feet and thanked him—and he was a Samaritan. Jesus asked, 'Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? Has no one returned to give praise to God except this foreigner?' Then he said to him, 'Rise and go; your faith has made you well.'" (Luke 17:11-19)

- Other examples of individuals afflicted with terrible diseases to turn their attention to God abound in the Old and New Testaments.

Examples of Nations Inflicted with Terrible Diseases

- In the Book of Exodus, we read of God using terrible plagues, including horrific diseases, to execute judgment against the nation of Egypt, and to draw the Israelites closer to Himself. Such plagues are central, of course, to the famous account of Passover. Yet it is worth noting that before the judgments began, God specifically warned Egypt's leaders of what would come if they would not humble themselves and obey the Lord. "Then the Lord said to Moses: Go to Pharaoh and speak to him, 'Thus says the Lord, the God of the Hebrews, "Let My people go, that they may serve Me." For if you refuse to let them go and continue to hold them, behold, the hand of the Lord will come with a **very severe pestilence**…'" (Exodus 9:1-3, NASB)

- Repeatedly in the Books of Leviticus and Deuteronomy, the nation of Israel is commanded how to deal with pestilence and plagues when they come. Genuine repentance, atonement and turning back to God in a healthy, Biblical relationship are the most important directives. Yet the Lord also instructs the nation of Israel about the vital importance of personal hygiene and social distancing in combatting infectious diseases such as leprosy (see Leviticus chapters 13-15).

    - "The priest shall look at the mark on the skin of the body, and if the hair in the infection has turned white and the infection appears to be deeper than the skin of his body, it is an infection of leprosy; when the priest has looked at him, he shall pronounce him unclean. But if the bright spot is white on the skin of his body, and it does not appear to be deeper than the skin, and the hair on it has not turned white, then the priest shall isolate him who has the infection for seven days. The priest shall look at him on the seventh day, and if in his eyes the infection has not changed and the infection has not spread on the skin, then the priest shall isolate him for seven more days. The priest shall look at him again on the seventh day, and if the infection has faded and the mark has not spread on the skin, then the priest shall pronounce him clean; it is only a scab. And he shall wash his clothes and be clean." (Leviticus 13:3-6)

    - "As for the leper who has the infection, his clothes shall be torn, and the hair of his head shall be uncovered….He shall remain unclean all the days during which he has the infection; he is unclean. He shall live alone; his dwelling shall be outside the camp…." (Leviticus 13:45-46)

- The Lord also instructed priests to carefully inspect clothing and other articles that could be infected. "Then the priest shall look at the mark and shall quarantine the article with the mark for seven days," and if the article truly is infected "it shall be burned in the fire." (Leviticus 13:47-59)

- "Now when the man with the discharge becomes cleansed from his discharge, then he shall count off for himself seven days for his cleansing; he shall then wash his clothes and bathe his body in running water and will become clean." (Leviticus 15:13)

- In the Book of Numbers, we read that God allowed a plague of disease to execute judgment against unrepentant Israelites, and to shake the rest of the nation of Israel in an attempt to draw them closer to Him.

  - Numbers 16:41-50 – "[T]he Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 'Get away from among this congregation, that I may consume them instantly.' Moses said to Aaron…'[M]ake atonement for them, for wrath has gone forth from the Lord, the **plague** has begun.' Then Aaron took it as Moses had spoken, and ran into the midst of the assembly, for behold, the **plague** had begun among the people. So, he put on the incense and made atonement for the people. He took his stand between the dead and the living, so that the **plague** was checked. But those who died by the **plague** were 14,700…." (NASB)

  - Numbers 25:1-9 – "While Israel remained at Shittim, the people began to play the harlot with the daughters of Moab. For they invited the people to the sacrifices of their gods, and the people ate and bowed down to their gods. So Israel joined themselves to Baal of Peor, and the Lord was angry against Israel [apparently then setting into motion a **plague** against the unrepentant sons of Israel]….Those who died by the **plague** were 24,000." (NASB)

- In the Book of 1 Samuel, we read how the Lord God sent a plague against the Philistines living in and around Gaza because of their chronic and unrepentant sin. "[T]he hand of the Lord was against the city with very great confusion; and He smote the men of the city, both young and old, so that tumors broke out on them….For there was a deadly confusion throughout the city; the hand of God was very heaven there. And the men who did not die were smitten with tumors and the cry of the city went up to heaven….And they said, "[O]ne **plague** was on all of you and your lords." (see 1 Samuel chapters 5 and 6)

- In the Book of 2 Samuel, we read how David, the King of Israel, sinned and "the anger of the Lord burned against Israel." (24:1). "So the Lord sent a **pestilence** upon Israel from the morning until the appointed time, and 70,000 men of the people from Dan to Beersheba died….Then David spoke to the Lord…and said, 'Behold, it is I who have sinned, and it is I who have done wrong'….David built there an altar to the Lord and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. Thus

the Lord was moved by prayer for the land, and the **plague** was held back from Israel." (see all of 2 Samuel 24, NASB)

- In the Book of Jeremiah, the ancient Hebrew prophet Jeremiah speaks a word of great warning to a gathering of apostate leaders. "[H]ear now this word which I am about to speak in your hearing and in the hearing of all the people. The prophets who were before me and before you from ancient times prophesied against many lands and against great kingdoms, of war and of calamity and of **pestilence**." (Jeremiah 28:7-8, NASB)

- In the Book of Ezekiel, the Lord God warned that the nation of Judah would be struck with terrible diseases as part of its judgment at the time when the Babylonians would come to conquer the land and destroy Jerusalem. This prophecy came to pass in the period leading up to and during 586 B.C.

    - Ezekiel 5 – "Thus says the Lord GOD, 'This is Jerusalem; I have set her at the center of the nations, with lands around her. But she has rebelled against My ordinances more wickedly than the nations and against My statutes more than the lands which surround her; for they have rejected My ordinances and have not walked in My statutes.' Therefore, thus says the Lord GOD, 'Because you have more turmoil than the nations which surround you *and* have not walked in My statutes, nor observed My ordinances, nor observed the ordinances of the nations which surround you,' therefore, thus says the Lord GOD, 'Behold, I, even I, am against you, and I will execute judgments among you in the sight of the nations....**One third of you will die by plague** or be consumed by famine among you, one third will fall by the sword around you, and one third I will scatter to every wind, and I will unsheathe a sword behind them.....So, it will be a reproach, a reviling, a warning and an object of horror to the nations who surround you when I execute judgments against you in anger, wrath and raging rebukes. I, the Lord, have spoken....Moreover, I will send on you famine and wild beasts, and they will bereave you of children; **plague** and bloodshed also will pass through you, and I will bring the sword on you. I the Lord have spoken.'" (Ezekiel 5:5-12, NASB)

    - The Hebrew prophet Ezekiel continued to warn the nation of Judah over and over again that judgments of plagues and pestilences were coming. (See Ezekiel 6:11-12, 7:15, 12:16, 14:19, 14:21, NASB)

- In the Book of Ezekiel, the Lord God warned that the city of Sidon (located in the country we now call Lebanon) would be struck with terrible diseases as a divine judgment for unrepentant sin. "And the word of the Lord came to me saying, 'Son of man, set your face toward Sidon, prophesy against her and say, "Thus says the Lord God, 'Behold, I am against you, O Sidon, and I will be glorified in your midst. Then they will know that I am the Lord when I execute judgments in her, and I will manifest My holiness in her. For I will send **pestilence** to her and blood to her streets....'"" (Ezekiel 28:20-24, NASB)

- In the Book of Amos, the Lord God warned the nation of Israel that they would be struck will terrible diseases as a divine judgment for unrepentant sin. "Hear the word which the Lord has spoken against you, sons of Israel….'Surely, the Lord God does nothing unless He reveals His secret counsel to His servants the prophets….I sent a **plague** among you after the manner of Egypt; I slew your young men by the sword along with your captured horses, and I made the stench of your camp rise up in your nostrils; yet you have not returned to Me,' declares the Lord….'Seek the Lord that you may live, or He will break forth lie a fire, O house of Joseph, and it will consume with none to quench it….'" (Amos 3:1, 7, 4:10, 5:6, NASB)

- In the Book of Habakkuk, we again see the Lord God speaking through an ancient Hebrew prophet, warning the nation of Israel that He uses plagues and pestilences to bring judgment to His unrepentant people. "'Look among the nations! Observe! Be astonished! Wonder! Because I am doing something in your days – you would not believe if you were told'….Then the Lord answered me and said, 'Record the vision and inscribe it on tablets, that the one who reads it may run. For the vision is yet for the appointed time; it hastens toward the goal and it will not fail'….A prayer of Habakkuk, the prophet…'Lord, I have heard the report about You and I fear. O Lord, revive Your work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make it known; in wrath remember mercy….Before Him goes **pestilence**, and **plague** comes after Him….You struck the head of the house of evil.'" (Habakkuk 1:5, 2:1-2, 3:1-2, 5, 13, NASB)

- All of these ancient prophecies came to pass in history, just as foretold.

<u>Examples of Bible Prophecies Concerning Future Pestilences and Plagues</u>

The Lord God warned the children of Israel that terrible diseases would result from chronic, unrepentant sin.

- Deuteronomy 28:15-22 – "But it shall come about, if you do not obey the Lord your God, to observe to do all His commandments and serve to do all with which I charge you today, that all these curses will come upon you and overtake you….The Lord will make the **pestilence** cling to you until He has consumed you from the land where you are entering to possess it. The Lord will smite you with consumption and with fever and inflammation and with fiery heat and with the sword and with blight and with mildew, and they will pursue until you perish." (NASB)

- Deuteronomy 28:58-62 – "If you are not careful to observe all the words of this law which are written in this book, to fear this honored and awesome name, the Lord your God, then the Lord will bring **extraordinary plagues** on you and your descendants, even **severe and lasting plagues, and miserable and chronic sicknesses.** He will bring back on you all the diseases of Egypt of

which you were afraid, and they will cling to you. Also every sickness and every **plague** which, not written in the book of this law, the Lord will bring on you until you are destroyed. Then you shall be left few in number, whereas you were as numerous as the stars of heaven, because you did not obey the Lord your God." (NASB)

The Lord God also repeatedly warned the nations of the world beyond Israel that terrible diseases would be inflicted upon them in the future both as judgment for chronic, unrepentant sin, and to shake the nations and draw them to the Lord.

Consider several Old Testament examples:

- Ezekiel 38-39 – In the prophecies known to Bible scholars as the eschatological "War of Gog and Magog," a coalition of nations will form against Israel in the "last days" of history (38:16). Among these nations: Russia, Iran, Turkey, Libya, and Sudan. The coalition will come against the nation of Israel "like a storm" (38:9) and try to consume, loot and destroy Israel. Speaking through the ancient Hebrew prophet Ezekiel, the Lord God warns that when that attack against Israel comes, He will defend Israel and defeat her enemies using a range of destructive measures, including terrible diseases. God says he will do so to execute judgment and draw people to Himself. (NASB)

    - Judgment – "With **pestilence** and with blood I will enter into judgment with him; and I will rain on him and on his troops, and on the many peoples who are with him, a torrential rain, with hailstones, fire and brimstone. I will magnify Myself, sanctify Myself, and make Myself known in the sight of many nations; and they will know that I am the Lord." (Ezekiel 38:22-23, NASB)

    - Judgment – "I will set My glory among the nations; and all the nations will see My judgment which I have executed and My hand which I have laid on them." (Ezekiel 38:21, NASB)

    - Mercy – "Therefore, thus says the Lord God, 'Now [after the judgment unfolds] I will restore the fortunes of Jacob and have mercy on the whole house of Israel; and I will be jealous for My holy name.'" (Ezekiel 39:25, NASB)

    - Mercy – "Then they will know that I am the Lord their God because I made them go into exile among the nations, and then gathered them again to their land; and I will none of them there any longer. I will not hide My face from them any longer, for I will have poured out My Spirit on the house of Israel,' declares the Lord God." (Ezekiel 39:28-29, NASB)

- Jeremiah 49 – Through the ancient Hebrew prophet Jeremiah, the Lord God warned the nation we know today as the Kingdom of Jordan that it would face plagues in the last days as a matter of judgment. "Also, Edom shall be a

desolation: everyone that goeth by it shall be astonished and shall hiss at all the **plagues** thereof. As in the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah and the neighbour cities thereof, saith the LORD, no man shall abide there, neither shall a son of man dwell in it." (Jeremiah 49:17-18, King James Version, KJV)

- Jeremiah 50 – Through the ancient Hebrew prophet Jeremiah, the Lord God warned the nation we know today as the Republic of Iraq – the land known in the Bible as Babylon – that it would face plagues in the last days as a matter of judgment. "Because of the wrath of the LORD it shall not be inhabited, but it shall be wholly desolate: everyone that goeth by Babylon shall be astonished, and hiss at all her **plagues**." (Jeremiah 50:13, KJV)

- Zechariah 14 – Through the ancient Hebrew prophet Zechariah, the Lord God warned that He will inflict terrible diseases on all the nations of the world that attack Jerusalem in the last days of history as a divine judgment. "Behold, a day is coming [when] I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle….Then the Lord will go forth and fight against those nations….In that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives….And the Lord will be king over all the earth; in that day the Lord will be the only one, and His name the only one….Now this will be the **plague** with which the Lord will strike all the peoples who have gone to war against Jerusalem; their flesh will rot while they stand on their feet, and their eyes will rot in their sockets, and their tongue will rot in their mouth. It will come about in that day that a great panic from the Lord will fall on them….So also like this **plague** will be the **plague** on the horse, the mule, the camel, the donkey and all the cattle that will be in those camps…." (Zechariah 14:1, 3, 4, 9, 12, 13, 15, NASB)

- The Book of Revelation – No fewer than 12 times in the Book of Revelation, the Lord God warns that terrible pestilence and plagues will come to the nations of the earth as part of His judgment of sin, prior to the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. This period is known by Bible scholars as the "Great Tribulation" (Revelation 7:14), and it will involve the most devastating period of divine judgment for unrepentant sin in all of human history.

    - "I looked, and behold, an ashen horse; and he who sat on it had the name Death; and Hades was following with him. Authority was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword and with famine and with **pestilence** and by the wild beasts of the earth." (Revelation 6:8, NASB)

    - "By these three ***plagues*** <u>a third of mankind was killed</u>—by the fire and the smoke and the brimstone which came out of their mouths." (Revelation 9:18, KJV)

    - "But the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these **plagues**, did not repent of the works of their hands, that they should not worship demons, and idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk." (Revelation 9:20, KJV)

- "These have power to shut heaven, so that no rain falls in the days of their prophecy; and they have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to strike the earth with all **plagues**, as often as they desire." (Revelation 11:6, KJV)

- "Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous: seven angels having the seven last **plagues,** for in them the wrath of God is complete." (Revelation 15:1, KJV)

- "And out of the temple came the seven angels having the seven **plagues**, clothed in pure bright linen, and having their chests girded with golden bands." (Revelation 15:6, KJV)

- "The temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from His power, and no one was able to enter the temple till the seven **plagues** of the seven angels were completed." (Revelation 15:8, KJV)

- "And men were scorched with great heat, and they blasphemed the name of God who has power over these **plagues**; and they did not repent and give Him glory." (Revelation 16:9)

- "And great hail from heaven fell upon men, *each hailstone* about the weight of a talent. Men blasphemed God because of the **plague** of the hail, since that **plague** was exceedingly great." (Revelation 16:21, KJV)

- "And I heard another voice from heaven saying, "Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her **plagues**." (Revelation 18:4, KJV)

- "Therefore, her **plagues** will come in one day—death and mourning and famine. And she will be utterly burned with fire, for strong *is* the Lord God who judges her." (Revelation 18:8, KJV)

- "Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls filled with the seven last **plagues** came to me and talked with me, saying, "Come, I will show you the bride, the Lamb's wife." (Revelation 21:9, KJV)

Conclusion

"Plagues are a way that God seeks to get our attention about our finitude and mortality as well as how we are giving attention to God," notes Dr. Darrell Bock, theologian and professor at Dallas Theological Seminary. "They are an opportunity for reflection about how we live and a reminder we are not gods ourselves."[3]

[3] Email to the author.

Yes, the Bible teaches that God uses pestilence and plagues to judge. Yet, as we have seen, He also uses them to warn and to shake people and nations to get their attention and draw them to a right and healthy and joyful relationship with Him.

Indeed, the Lord God in His lovingkindness definitively promised to be gracious to forgive and heal the people of Israel if they were stricken with terrible diseases and then repented of their sins.

- 2 Chronicles 7:12-14 – "Then the Lord appeared to Solomon at night and said to him, 'I have heard your prayer and have chosen this place for Myself as a house of sacrifice. If I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or if I command the locust to devour the land, or if I send **pestilence** among My people, and My people who are called by My name humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, will forgive their sin and heal their land." (NASB)

While in this particular (and famous) passage of Scripture, the divine promise to hear, forgive and heal is specifically for the nation of Israel, the principle applies to all nations. The Lord God loves and cares deeply about the Jewish people and the State of Israel. Yet the Bible is crystal clear that He also loves and cares deeply about all people and desires all to repent and find healing and forgiveness.

- Jeremiah 18:7-8 – "At one moment I might speak concerning a nation or concerning a kingdom to uproot, to pull down, or to destroy it. If that nation against which I have spoken turns from its evil, I will relent concerning the calamity I planned to bring on it." (NASB)

- John 3:16 – "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life." (NASB)

- I Timothy 2:1-7 – "First of all, then, I urge that entreaties and prayers, petitions and thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men, for kings and all who are in authority, so that we might lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity. This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself as a ransom for all, the testimony given at the proper time. For this I was appointed a preacher and an apostle…." (NASB)

In a time of global pandemics, people are understandably frightened.

The Lord Jesus warned this would be the case, noting that when the signs of the last days occur, we will see "men fainting from fear and the expectation of the things which are coming upon the world; for the powers of the heavens will be shaken." (Luke 21:26, NASB)

Yet the Lord Jesus also told us how to respond in such dark times.

"Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near." (Luke 21:28, NKJV)

What the Bible teaches is most important in such times is that we individually, personally and humbly seek God's forgiveness and mercy, and get ourselves spiritually ready for the return of Jesus Christ by reading and obeying the Bible, which is the holy Word of God.

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